

# **Review of the Council's Civil Resilience and Response in Emergency Situations**

**Scrutiny Committee**

**Date: 12<sup>th</sup> February 2018**

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Author: Director of Public Health

Wards: All Wards

Parishes Affected: All Parishes

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## **1. Purpose and Reasons**

- 1.1 This reports sets out the Civil Protection arrangements within Swindon Borough Council.
- 1.2 The Civil Contingencies Act (CCA) 2004, the Health and Social Care Act 2012, and other associated legislation, places specific duties upon Swindon Borough Council to ensure that if an emergency occurs the council is able to manage the emergency, in cooperation with other 'Category 1' responders. The Local Authority is also the lead agency for the recovery period of a Major Incident.
- 1.3 The Health and Social Care Act 2012 places additional responsibilities upon the local authority, through the Director of Public Health, to plan for and respond to health emergencies.
- 1.4 In addition to our legal responsibilities, the Council's Civil Protection and Emergency Planning Resilience & Response (EPRR) activities link to the following Council priorities: Priority 3: to ensure clean and safe streets and improve our public spaces and local culture and Priority 4: to help people to help themselves while always protecting our most vulnerable children and adults.

## **2. Recommendations**

The Committee is recommended to:

- 2.1 Note the contents of this report.

## **3. Detail**

Legal Responsibilities

- 3.1 The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 establishes a clear set of roles and responsibilities for organisations involved in emergency preparation and response at the local level. The Act divides local responders into 2 categories, imposing a different set of duties on each. Category 1 responders are organisations at the core of the response to most emergencies (the emergency services, local authorities, NHS bodies).
- 3.2 Category 2 responders (including the Health and Safety Executive, transport and utility companies) are 'co-operating bodies'. They are less likely to be involved in

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the heart of planning work, but may be heavily involved in incidents that affect their own sector. Swindon Borough council is a Category 1 responder.

- 3.3 The CCA places seven specific legal responsibilities upon local authorities as Category 1 responders in relation to civil protection, namely:

3.3.1 assess the risk of emergencies occurring and use this to inform contingency planning

3.3.2 put in place emergency plans

3.3.3 put in place business continuity management arrangements

3.3.4 put in place arrangements to make information available to the public about civil protection matters and maintain arrangements to warn, inform and advise the public in the event of an emergency

3.3.5 share information with other local responders to enhance co-ordination

3.3.6 co-operate with other local responders to enhance co-ordination and efficiency

3.3.7 provide advice and assistance to businesses and voluntary organisations about business continuity management (local authorities only)

## Health and Social Care Act 2012

- 3.4 The Health and Social Care Act 2012 made significant changes to the health system in England from April 2013.
- 3.5 Directors of Public Health carry out the local authority's public health functions, including planning for and responding to emergencies involving a risk to public health. The role in health protection planning is not a managerial, but a local public health leadership function.
- 3.6 Local authorities and Directors of Public Health are expected to collaborate with NHS and Public Health England to plan and prepare for, and to contribute to responses to emergency situations.
- 3.7 Local Health Resilience Partnerships (LHRPs) are the mechanisms for delivering national EPRR strategy in the context of local risks. These bring together the health sector organisations involved in emergency preparedness and response at the Local Resilience Forum (LRF) level.

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## Relationships with Other Partner Agencies

- 3.8 Swindon Borough Council has a good record in meeting its statutory obligations under the CCA and is regarded as a strong and active partner both within the Wiltshire and Swindon Local Resilience Forum (LRF) and the Wiltshire and Swindon LHRP.
- 3.9 Other partner agencies at the LRF include the emergency services, NHS, Public Health England, Wiltshire Council and Environment Agency.
- 3.10 Partner agencies at the LHRP include NHS England Area Team, Public Health England, Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCG's), South West Ambulance Service, NHS Acute Trusts, Avon & Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership and Wiltshire Council.
- 3.11 The council has detailed plans in place for emergency response and recovery and has direct experience of management of incidents including the floods in 2007 and the Swindon Averies Waste Fire Major Incident in 2014. Our plans are regularly reviewed, updated and exercised in consultation with our partners.
- 3.12 The Wiltshire and Swindon Local Resilience Forum (LRF) Emergency Multi-agency Procedures (EMAP) document details overarching multi-agency procedures in relation to response, recovery and business continuity in the event of a Major Incident or other emergency. This plan is supported by a number of other subject specific LRF and agency plans, including our own Local Authority plans (e.g. SBC Major Incident Guide, SBC Recovery Plan & SBC Administration of Rest Centres Guide).
- 3.13 Details of our plans can be found on the SBC intranet pages. Where security of specific plans are a concern, these plans are stored on the Resilience Direct site which is accessible only to authorised users.

## SBC Civil Protection and Emergency Planning Resilience Response Structure

- 3.14 The current Civil Protection Unit (CPU) structure consists of 1 x Civil Protection unit Manager and 1 x Civil Protection & Health Resilience Officer. The unit is responsible for ensuring that our emergency plans are robust and up to date, for overseeing the Council's emergency on call arrangements and for ensuring that plans are exercised and relevant staff adequately trained. CPU staff are available to provide advice to Tactical and Strategic officers at all times.
- 3.15 SBC emergency on-call rotas are in place at Operational, Tactical and Strategic levels. Officers on each rota perform on-call duties for a week at a time on a rotating basis, thus ensuring that the Council has officers available at each level to respond to incidents at all times.

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- 3.16 The Operational level rota currently consists of eight officers who perform the role as volunteers in addition to their core SBC role. Tactical and Strategic level officers perform on-call duties as a requirement of their job role. On – call officers have received training to prepare them to carry out their role. Refresher training and additional specialist courses are available as required.

## Recent Events

- 3.17 The Grenfell Tower fire incident which occurred on 14<sup>th</sup> June 2017 in the Borough of Kensington & Chelsea resulted in an estimated 80 deaths and injury to over 70 others. This incident was subject to heavy public and political scrutiny, resulting in resignation of the Kensington & Chelsea Chief Executive, Leader and some elected members. It is important to note that whilst the circumstances regarding the Grenfell Tower incident have, and continue to, attract scrutiny and criticism, there are many other national examples of well managed incidents such as Manchester Arena, Westminster Bridge and London Borough Market.
- 3.18 At a local level, large scale incidents are rare. The only recent 'Major Incident' was the Averies Waste Fire in 2014. This was a protracted incident lasting for several months which had a significant impact upon the Council's resources.
- 3.19 Most incidents in the Borough are smaller scale and do not require significant response from the Council. In 2016 the Council responded to 44 incidents, the majority of which were minor. Unfortunately we responded to a significant house fire which resulted in the tragic loss of two lives. Table 1 illustrates the number and types of incidents over the last two years.

**Table 1: Number & Types of Incidents 2016-2017**

<b>Type Of Incident</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>
Fire	17	21
Collapsed / Unstable Structure	11	7
Water / Flooding	5	1
Road Traffic Collision	3	1
Loss Of Electricity	0	2
Gas Leak	3	2
Contamination	1	2

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Telephony Failure	1	0
Road Defect	1	0
Suspicious Package	0	1
Other	1	2
Total	43	40

## National and Regional Training and Exercising

### 3.20 Multi-agency Training and Exercising

- Introduction to Integrated Emergency Management (IIEEM) / Multi Agency Tactical Training (MATT)
- Exercise Concido (major incident recovery exercise) – 6<sup>th</sup> July 2017
- Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles (JESIP) training
- Exercise Astral Bend transport of nuclear materials incident) Lyneham – 13<sup>th</sup> Sept 2017

### 3.21 Swindon Borough Council Local Training

- Members Training
- Out of hours on call officers training
- Quarterly Training / Desktop Exercises
- Incident Officers debriefs

## Links with / role of Parish Councils

3.22 The Grenfell Tower incident highlighted the need for local authorities to be fully engaged with local communities to maximise the use of available facilities and resources. The establishment of new parishes in Swindon presents opportunities to localise Civil Protection and make use of the vast amount of local knowledge and goodwill existing across the Borough.

3.23 The opportunities include the updating of Parish Emergency Plans, Flood Plans and access to local resources and facilities such as Community Halls.

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## **4. Alternative Options**

4.1 None.

## **5. Implications, Diversity Impact Assessment and Risk Management**

### Financial and Procurement Implications

5.1 There are no additional financial and procurement implications.

### Legal and Human Rights Implications

5.2 There are no additional Legal and Human Rights implications.

### All Other Implications (including Staff, Sustainability, Health, Rural, Crime and Disorder)

5.3 Chaotic response to incidents has been shown to have a significant impact on mental health. Structured planning and response is protective of the mental health of our communities and staff.

### Diversity Impact Assessment

5.4 A Diversity Impact Assessment has not been completed for this report. There is no adverse impact on any of the protected characteristics of the Equalities Act.

### Risk Management

5.5 There are no additional risk management issues.

## **6. Consultees**

6.1 The Director of Finance (Section 151 Officer) and Director of Law and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) are consulted in respect of all reports.

## **7. Background Papers**

7.1 None.

## **8. Appendices**

8.1 None.